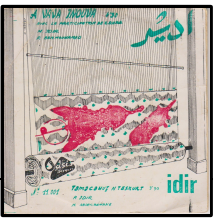


8. Bayreuth-Frankfurt-Leidener Kolloquium zur Berberologie
Université de Bayreuth – Allemagne
9-11 octobre 2014, Iwalewa-Haus

Baba-inu ba:
retrieving an archaic
Berber literary
formula

Vermondo Brugnatelli
Università di Milano-Bicocca





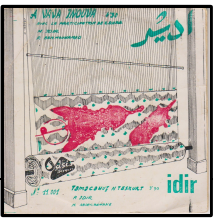
Baba-inu ba: retrieving an archaic Berber literary formula

Ben Mohamed - Idir

*Ṭxil-ik lli-yi-n tebburt a baba-inu ba.
Ççen-ççen tizebgatin-im a yelli Ḡriba.
Ug^wadey lweḥc l_lyaba a baba-inu ba.
Ug^wadey ula d nekkini a yelli Ḡriba.*

‘I beseech you, open the door for me, father.
Jingle your bracelets, oh my daughter Ghriba.
I’m afraid of the monster in the forest, father.
I, too, am afraid, oh my daughter Ghriba.’

(Jane E. Goodman, *Berber Culture on the World Stage: From Village to Video*,
Indiana University Press, 2005, p. 62)



Baba-inu ba: retrieving an archaic Berber literary formula

Taos Amrouche

Le grain magique ('The Magic Grain', 1966):

ô mon père Inoubba ('oh, my father Inubba')

- Oulebsir 2005 (*Le père Inoubaâ et le chêne de Ouarzen* p. 241-242)
- Boussekine 2005 (« Ouvre-moi la porte, Vava Inouva ! »)
- Rabdi 2006 (*Baba Inuba* p. 194-204)
- Mankour 2009 (« *vava inouva*, mon père chéri »)
- Alloui 2010 (*Vava-Ynouva et Ghrova* p. 61-66 and 143-148).



Baba-inu ba: retrieving an archaic Berber literary formula

Leo Frobenius

Leo Frobenius, *Volksmärchen und Volksdichtungen Afrikas*
Band III, Jena 1921 [*Märchen der Kabysten III, das Fabelhafte*]

Rova (probably = *Yriba*):

avava (Vater) *inova* (ich bin es)! (p. 126)

‘*avava* (father) *inova* (it is me)!’

chleuh: *baba, bba, ibba*

Maroc Central: *baba, bba, bb^wa, ibba*

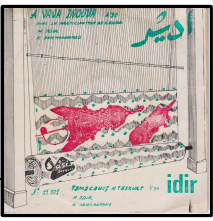
Iznassen: *baba, bba, bb^wa*

Mzab: *aba, baba*

Siwa: *abba*

Ahaggar: *ǎbba*

Niger: *abba*



Baba-inu ba: retrieving an archaic Berber literary formula

Ahellil du Gourara

Mouloud Mammeri, *L'ahellil du Gourara*, Paris, Awal, 1984

(ya)jj-inu yemma ‘Mère, ah! Mère’ (‘Mother, o Mother!’)

(different spellings: *jjinu*; *yajjinu*; *ya jji-nu*; *ya jjinu*)

Jerba, Zuara and possibly also Douiret:

yemma ‘my mother’

but:

yeğğ-ik ‘your (m.s.) mother’

yeğğ-im ‘your (f.s.) mother’

yeğğ-is ‘his/her mother’

etc.

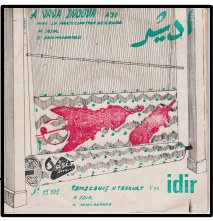
likewise Tuareg:

adda, abba ‘my father’

but *ti-k, ti-s* ‘your (s.m.), his father’, etc.;

anna ‘my mother’

but *ma-k, ma-s* ‘your (s.m.), his mother’
etc.



Baba-inu ba: retrieving an archaic Berber literary formula

Central Morocco

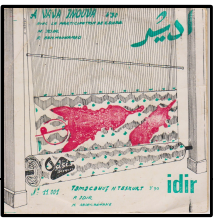
Michaël Peyron, *Isaffen Ghbanin (Rivières profondes) Poésies du Moyen Atlas Marocain traduites et annotées*, Casablanca, Wallada, s.d. (1993).

*a mma-nu a yemma tcemmet diy-i twessart
iwten ltam ur as-engellib aqmu ttux-t*

ma mère, la veille femme voilée m'a trompé
j'ai oublié de vérifier si des dents lui manquaient!

(‘O my mother, o mother, I have been cheated by the old woman
wrapped in her veil: I haven’t checked her mouth, I forgot it’)

[poem n. 388, p. 184 (Aït Yahya)]



Baba-inu ba: retrieving an archaic Berber literary formula

Ayt Khabbash

Cynthia J. Becker, *Amazigh Arts in Morocco. Women Shaping Berber Identity*, Austin, University of Texas, 2006

yelli-new yelli a ta qqim g lman (...) / *A baba ya baba qqim g lman...*
'My daughter stay in peace (...)' / 'Oh father, oh father, stay in peace'
(p. 123)

yelli-new yelli dag-d ulin / ad iwert-nnum hat-it manzat-it
'my daughter, my daughter, when they (the husband and his male relatives)
come home / I don't want her to get into the habit of roaming around...'
(p. 199)

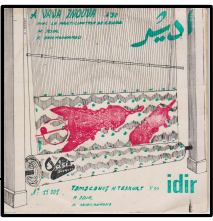
Ayt Atta:

baba-new baba qim gi lman

yelli-new yelli mun d lman

'my father, father, stay in peace (I bid you farewell)

my daughter, daughter, may peace accompany you (goodbye until we meet again)'



Baba-inu ba: retrieving an archaic Berber literary formula

Aït Souab

Jean Podeur, *Textes berbères des Aït Souab. Anti-Atlas, Maroc*,
Aix-en-Provence, Edisud, 1995

*a wi nu, a baba war lmal,
ar nit ittgalla s Rebbi ur t yumin yan*

‘O mon Dieu, ô mon père, dépourvu de tout bien / il jure par Dieu, pas un seul
ne daigne le croire’

‘Oh, my God, oh my father, lacking any riches / he swears in the name of God
but nobody believes him’.

(Podeur 1995: 58-59)



Baba-inu ba: retrieving an archaic Berber literary formula

Comparison

baba-inu, ba (Kabyle)

a wi-nu, a baba (Aït Souab)

baba-new baba (Ait Atta)

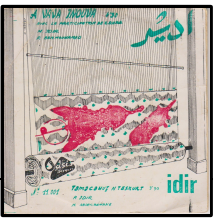
yajj-inu, yemma (Gourara)

a mma-nu a yemma (Aït Yahya)

yelli-new, yelli (Ayt Khabbash, Ait Atta)

Common structure:

kinship term₁ + affix *-(i)new* // kinship term₂ (with inherent specification of the first person)



Baba-inu ba: retrieving an archaic Berber literary formula

Expressions influenced by this formula

a tasa nu, a immi, bbin-tt, išša tt ušmmiḍ

‘et mon cœur, ô ma mère, mon cœur lacéré, dévoré de froid’

(Paulette Galand-Pernet, *Recueil de poèmes chleuhs: Chants de trouveurs*, Paris, Klincksieck, 1972, p. 122-123)

Ahellil:

ya lall’inu ya lalla ‘et toi, ma Dame, Dame’ (p. 146)

lall-inu tara ‘Ma Dame aimée’ (p. 108)

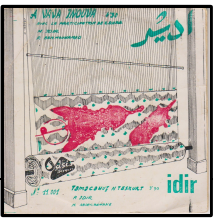
lall’inu lla Meryama ‘Ma Dame Marie’ (p. 134)

a mma-nw a tenna yi-yurun

a mma-nw a tenn’ ay-issegman

‘Oh, my mother, oh, the one who bore me / oh, my mother, oh, the one who educated us’

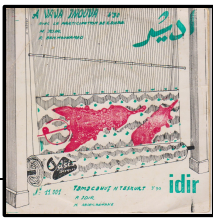
(Eumar Ṭaws, *Iledjigen n yigenna*, Rabat, Imprial, 1996, p. 6)



Baba-inu ba: retrieving an archaic Berber literary formula

The existence of common themes and myths in the various Berber literatures is a proven fact.

The discovery, over a vast area of the Berber world, of a literary formula, which not only preserves common themes but also the same expressive means is an important evidence that in ancient times the North-African peoples belonging to the same linguistic tradition shared a common literary tradition too, quite in the same way as the Indo-European peoples, besides a common language also shared a vast literary corpus.



Baba-inu ba: retrieving an archaic Berber literary formula

Thank you

Tanemmirt

ⵜ.ⵉⵎⵎⵉⵔⵜ ⵉⵎⵎⵉⵔⵜ